4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11



142
291
301

Collotype H. KLEINMANN & Co Photo by WINCH, Kendal

Kavirondo natives of Kitotos
Nilotic group or Ja-luo
The centre figure is an unmarried girl: the figures to right and left are married women
(Note decorated goat skin, sign of marriage)

[End plate VI]

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
Nandi FL13



N 787 824

from an examination of the entrails, delivers an augury on the success or otherwise of the expedition. Among his utterances he may remark that some will be wounded with arrows, and, upon hearing this, each *moran* proceeds to the nearest acacia tree and plucks a green thorn, and if he is possessor of a shield, he sticks the thorn in the wooden midrib of his shield and breaks it off, leaving the point of the thorn in the shield, and carries it into action with him; if he has no shield, he breaks off the thorn in the hair on his forehead; this is believed to be a most potent charm against arrow wounds.

N 843

Among the Nandi too, there is a curious custom which is performed by a married woman, when she discovers she is first pregnant.

She collects from the unmarried girls, who are her near neighbours, pieces of their dress, strings them together and sews them on to the lower edge of her own robe, which is a semi-tanned ox-hide. The unmarried girls in Nandi wear a small skin apron from which depends a number of leather strips or tassels; from one, the woman will borrow a single tassel, from another, a tassel, and perhaps from another girl, who has more than one dress, she will borrow the apron complete. She wears these until after the child is born as a charm to ensure her pregnancy taking its normal course, and then returns the borrowed articles, at the same time inviting all the lenders to a feast.

N 751 304

A sprig of a certain herb is often worn by the Nandi in a hole pierced in the upper lobe of the ear as a charm to avert evil.

L 751 301

The Ja-Luo, in fact all the Kavirondo people, wear numerous small charms suspended by string round the neck. I had often wondered what all these odds and ends represented, so I induced one of the principal chiefs, named Ugada, in a confidential moment to enumerate them and tell me their origin. They were:—

1. Iron arrow points, which were given him the day he was named.
2. A small strip of thin iron sheet with three holes punched in it (fig. 1). This signifies the name of his grandmother Thako, who bequeathed it to her daughter, with instructions, should she have a son, to call him Thako. (Thako is Ugada's second name.) This may point to some old survival of a time when men traced their ancestry through the female line. This, however, would hardly seem to be borne out by an examination of Ugada's genealogical tree which only takes account of the male line of descent.

Fig. 1.

3. A transparent crystal of rock crystal or quartz, said to have been picked up in the lake, as the rock around Kisumu is blackish basalt. If the story is true, it was probably dropped by some ancient resident in, or some visitor to, the locality. It is secured in a neat little leather cup shrunk on to the base of the crystal (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2.

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
Bantu Kavirondo FL4
Nandi FL13



L
751
301

4. An irregular piece of very hard yellowish stone which was worn by his father Otiendi; it has a hole bored through it, and an iron ring inserted (Fig. 3).

FIG. 3.

5. About half-a-dozen of the Nya-Luo ancient beads, the yellow variety.
6. A piece of goat-horn, worn as medicine to prevent chest complainta.
7. The dried beak of a chicken, which is also worn as medicine for sickness; a medicine man told him to wear it.
8. The upper portion of a large marine shell of the type shown in Fig. 4. The lower portion is cut away, and nothing but the helix at the top of the shell remains (Fig. 5). This ornament is very common among the Wanyamwezi, and probably worked its way from the south. It belonged to Ugada's father Otiendi, and is said to have come originally from Ogalo, chief of Kanyamwa on the south side of the bay.

FIG. 4.

FIG. 5.

9. Around the left wrist was a stout cord through the strands of which were inserted four small pieces of stick (Fig. 6). The sticks are called *omeni* and are worn to prevent the wearer taking harm if one of his children touches him; why, was not stated.

FIG. 6.

10. A heavy brass bracelet worn on the right wrist; this was said to be very old, and to come from Aiyimbo, in the direction of Uganda. It belonged first to his brother Obiero.
11. A tiny square bag of skin, contents unknown, said to contain medicine for rheumatism, from which the old man suffers.

L
B
N
771

## TOTEMS.

Some efforts have been made to elucidate some facts with regard to the presence of a belief in totemism among the people, whose manners and customs are now under investigation. Researches upon this point however are attended with great difficulty, as it is not considered a suitable subject of conversation, and one and all are very reticent upon the point. The natives of the Bantu Kavirondo, Nilotic Kavirondo and Nandi groups all have a belief in the totems or *muziro*, but, apparently, no such thing as totem worship exists, nor do the Bantu and Nilotic Kavirondo believe in their descent from the *muziro* or totem, but a Nandi informed me that many of his tribe did believe in their original descent from a totem.

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
Bantu Kavirondo FL4
Nandi FL3



Among the Bantu people each clan appears to have its own particular totem, and this may have given rise to their custom of exogamy, but in Nandi each individual is said to have his own totem irrespective of the clan. Practically the whole of the Nilotic group appear to have the same totems, but, in some parts, there are certain variations from what may be called the standard list of forbidden foods. Thus, although the exogamy which exists among the Nilotic Kavirondo may have originally arisen from totemism, the present survival of the belief has lost its original character.

In all the groups the totems appear to be animals, no example of a vegetable totem has been discovered.

The Bantu group use the word "*Muziro*" to denote the totem and, contrary to the usual belief, the eating of a totem animal is not thought to be followed by death, but only by a severe skin eruption; and if, by any mischance, the meat of the totem is eaten, the evil consequences referred to can be averted by making a medicine "*dawa*," extracted from certain herbs, and this extract is mixed with the fat of a black ox and rubbed all over the body of the patient.

Among the Nilotic Ja Luo the totems are called "*Kwero*," and there is a long list of "*Kwero*" animals which are forbidden as food to both men and women; there is, however, an additional list of food that women must not touch.

Upon no occasion is the rule of the *Kwero* relaxed, but, curiously, the animals on this "*index expurgatorius*" are considered malignant in their influence, and it is thought praiseworthy to kill them. Thus any "*Kwero*" animal can be hunted, with the exception of the crested crane (*Belearica gibbericeps*), which is, generally speaking, strictly preserved by all the Kavirondo. The Gemi tribe, however, do not consider it wrong to kill and also eat this beautiful bird. The Gemi, Lego, and Sakwa tribes can also eat the wild cat, called by them "*Oywang.*" The Ja-Luo often wear the teeth of the leopard and crocodile as ornaments, and the skin of the leopard and wild cat; this is not considered an infringement of the "*Kwero*" law.

*Examples of the Totems of the Bantu Family.*

| Clan or Tribe. | Special Totems. |
|---|---|
| Kisesi clan of Awa Wanga ... ... | *Imbongo*, bushbuck. |
| Marama and part of Tsoso and Isukha... | *Kuru*, waterbuck or *Ikulu*. |
| Awa-Genya and Awa-Mrashi ... ... | *Linsi*, pigeon. |
| Awa Shekwi of Nyole ... ... ... | *Njofu*, elephant. |
| In Ketosh there are several, according to to the clan, but over a large portion the special totem is | *Makuyi*, a large black and white stork which appears in large flocks about November, it eats locusts. |
| Tasoni tribe (Ngaki section) ... ... | *Isunu*, reed buck. |
| Ithako, E. Tsoso, S. Kabras ... ... | *Imbongo* or *Ngawe*. |
| Probably the totem most common in Kabras is | *Mbiakalo*, white ants in the flying stage (but cooked). They can be eaten raw, but not when cooked. |

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
Bantu Kavirondo FL4



L
B
291
142
301
516

Arabchebki, Lumbwa Chief.

Onduu : Kisumu Chief (Ja-Luo).

Gussangishu Warrior (Moran).

Ugada, Kisumu Chief (Ja-Luo).



[p.358 A]

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11
Bantu Kavirondo FL4

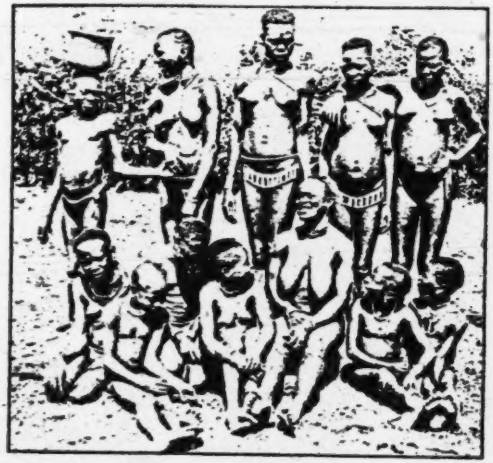
*Journal of the Anthropological Institute, Vol. XXXIII, 1903, Plate XXIX.*

1
B
291
301
304
142
516
[302]

Jaluo Girl ; Kajulu Tribe.

Lumbwa Woman and Young Girl.

Ketosh Woman (N. Bantu).



Kisumu Girls.

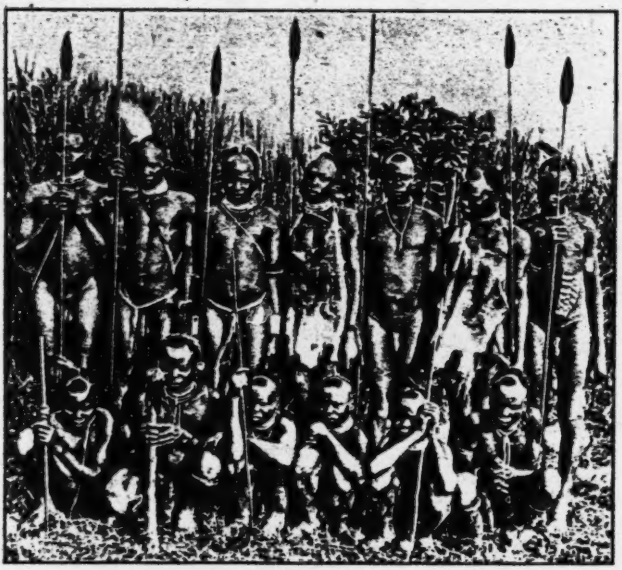
ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDIES IN KAVIRONDO AND NANDI.

[p. 358B]

5: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1903 FL11 Luo FL11

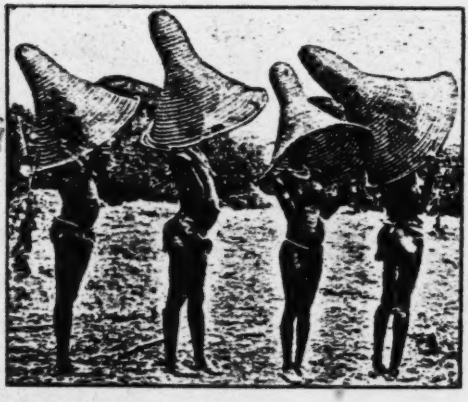


291
301
411
516
302
142



Koromojo Warriors.

291
142
482
25?
411
301



Fisherwomen; Kisumu.

Karungu Warriors (Ja-Luo).



[p.358]

241 Similarly, during this time she must be careful where she walks. She
841 can ruin a crop by walking through it. But, of course, in this case, she would suffer with the other members of the family.

462 From early childhood the girl is brought up as an agricultural
787 labourer. There was no class of women divorced from the soil. The
791 only class whose labours in agriculture were lightened were the women who belonged to the divining cult of " SEWE." Sewe is the spirit of divination and is supposed to have descended on those who have been delirious in illness. The delirium is the sign of possession. The devotees of the cult are mainly women, and they are a fairly common sight as they go about their avocation. They are skilled beggars as well as diviners. With their bodies festooned with strings of beads, shells, bells and other barbaric ornaments, they pass from kraal to kraal, and standing with their bodies leaning forward supported by a hand resting on a short stick they sing songs of the countryside and and are rewarded by presents of small baskets of grain. In this way women who have been ill are enabled to help to replenish the grain stores, which have probably run low during the illness.

241 Gradually a change is coming over the life of the women, due to
177 white influence. Ploughing by the men with teams of oxen, is setting
252 women free for other tasks. This movement is by no means wide-
462 spread, but it has begun, and its effect on the women has been great. Even if the husband has no team and plough himself, many wives do not rest content until the husband has hired a plough owner to come along and plough up the land. It is not unusual for ploughs to be taken 15 miles for this purpose. Again, the use of hand mills of the " Colonist " type, is easing women of much labour at the grind stones. These are much more common than ploughs, probably there are twenty mills for every plough in use. This is partly accounted for by the fact that the mills are turned by hand power, not by oxen. At this labour girls and women take their share, but whereas you would never see a man down on his knees at the grindstone, you do see them turning a mill. New activities are employing the time of many women, and those who have learned to knit or make palm mats in recent years are rapidly increasing in numbers.

CHILD LABOUR:

857 Generally speaking, from early childhood, all are required to make some contribution to the activities of the home. Girls for the fields, and boys for herding, is the broad division of labour, though the boys also lend a hand in the fields, and, very occasionally, a girl or woman may be seen herding. With the opening up of
593 avenues of wage-earning to the boys on coffee and tea estates, and in
464 other forms of employment, the male child is being made by impecuni-
651 ous parents to make his contribution to the family hut tax.

10: Roscoe M-5 (ca. 1900)1915
FL11 Luo FL11
Bantu Kavirondo FL4

*Plate XXII*

L
142
291
482
415
301

(1) Nilotic Kavirondo girls

B
142
291
301
304

(2) Young women ready for initiation ceremony
(*Bagesu Tribe*)

[facing p. 276]

11: Hartmann M-5 (ca. 1920)1928 FL11 Luo FL11



844 couple of women who have come to assist her, support her shoulders. If the woman is afraid or weak, somebody generally a strong woman is called to *thuñgo* her, i. e. she puts her mouth close on the mouth of the patient, and blows her breath down the patient's lungs in order to increase the pressure.

No sooner the child is born or one of the assisting women run out of the hut to pull out of the roof a piece of kaffircorn stalk, which is split leaving a sharp edge. This is used to cut the babe's navel after it has been tied off.

[201] If the babe is a boy the Kaffircorn stalk is pulled out of the roof at the side of the fire place of the hut *(Kor amach* = lefthand side facing the hut). If it is a girl, the stalk is pulled out *Kor attung* = the right hand side. Compare: Burial of children (p. 274).

When the afterbirth has come out the mother takes the child on her lap, whilst somebody runs for a drop of fresh sheepmilk — otherwise never consumed — which the child has to drink. Not until the child has swallowed a drop of this will the mother give the child suck.

846 Immediately after the birth of the child the husband orders a goat to be killed for the mother, and the pot is put to boil, for the mother has a ravenous appetite. Now word is sent to her father, who will kill a goat for his wife, who comes to see her daughter, bringing some of the meat and fish along.

For no purpose except nature's call is the mother to leave the hut within 4 days, if the babe is a boy. Then she takes the child outside, and a little patch of hair is shaven above the ears of father, mother and child.

852 After 10 days a bull and a heifer are bled, meat and fish is cooked, *simsim* is pounded and mixed with rendered butter, and the lot of it is to provide a good feed for the inhabitants of the kraal later in the day. On that day the heads of father, mother and child are shaven clean. Then after the woman is smeared [824] with butter and sprinkled with *simsim* seeds, seedballs of a wild plant *(ochok)* are strung on plaited grass *(oganga)* and creeping grass *(modhono)* and [301] hung crosswise over the shoulders and under the armpits of the young mother. In the same way she is ornamented with cowryshells, ordinary beads, beads of smallcircular pieces of ostrich eggs *(rek)* and big iron beads.

[262] When the woman is thus ornamented, a boy, her brother-in-law, is called to hold the child. Now an old woman brings *awinja* (= pounded *simsim* mixed with rendered butter) and cooked *wimbi*. She kneeds a mouthful of the food, making with her thumb a little pit in it *(othwonyo otonge)* which she fills with *awinja*, then she puts it on the end of a wooden ladle, used in stirring the food, 4 times to the mouth of the mother. The 5th time she puts it with the help of the ladle in the mother's mouth, who is not allowed to touch the food with her hand. After she has eaten this one mouthful, another mouthful is given in the same way to her young brother-in-law who holds the child.

Then meat, fish, blood and other food is brought for the inhabitants of the kraal. That night the father and mother of the child sleep again together for the first time after the birth of the child *(iñgado imbo nyathi)*.

If the babe is a girl the woman stays in the hut for 3 days, after which the child is taken outside and a little patch of hair is shaven also above

11: Hartmann M-5 (ca. 1920) 1928 FL11 Luo FL11

 583

ments such as beads brass bangles, bracelets, ect. Then they are allowed to take 585
the girl away, who goes along crying, or is dragged or pushed along and sometimes very roughly handled. After they have gone, the girls of the village dress themselves up in their best beads and tassels take their pipes and tobacco and follow them up.

When all arrive at the boy's village the couple enter the *simba*, where they 585
spend the day together with the boys of the village and the girls who followed the fiancee. In the evening the boys leave the hut and the girls bring a cowhide, which they put down on the floor. The young couple lie together, the girls holding her down if she is afraid or shy. Immediately afterwards the girls look for the hymen. If they find some they put it on the leave of an *ochok*-plant and start singing. Their songs are not always very modest.

In the early morning they resume their singing and go home, singing all the way, carrying with them the hymen. Arriving at their kraal, the women meet them at the entrance, where the hymen is shown to them as a proof that the girl was still a virgin when leaving home. Then they throw it away, and the women of the kraal start singing and dancing with the girls, after which the latter get their morning meal of gruel and beans.

After the girls have left the kraal of the bridegroom, the bride gets a new- [431]
"chip" and a new tassel. The latter is given her together with a goat, which later her sister will fetch away. The chip which she gets is a special one made for the [292]
occasion by her sisters-in-law. It is a fringe about a four inches long by three inches wide, made from the twisted fibrous marrow of a kaffir-corn stalk; some of th strings are blackened with charcoal, others whitened with *migosi*, others again colcured with red oker. With string his fringe is tied round the bride's waist to cover her nakedness.

From her brother-in-law the bride gets a hoe, formerly also a brass ornament [431]
round her forearm *(nalo)* and a leather string with iron beads about $^1/_2$ of an inch in diameter. *(ataka)* to be worn round the waist. At present the bride gets with [301]
the hoe either a goat or the equivalent, 6 Shillings.

After 4 days the bride's father kills a bull and the meat is taken to the kraal of the bridegroom. Next day the people there have a good feed, and the morning following the women and girls of the neighbourhood gather to take the bride home to her father again. When getting near the kraal they sing and shout which rouses the women and girls of her own village, who come out dancing and singing to meet the bride. Arriving at the entrance the women of the kraal stand in the opening of the fence, and go on singing for a while, preventing the bride to enter. The singing finished, the brother of the bride brings a life chicken, of which he cuts the lower part of the beak. This is tied with a string round the bride's neck, and the chicken is given to the children of the village who now kill and eat it. Then the bride is allowed to enter. Food is brought, and the visitors stay for the night. In the early morning they go home again, leaving the bride with her father.

About 5 days later the bridegroom sends a couple of friends with 2 or 3 more head of cattle towards the dowry. One of them must be a heifer, and the man who takes the cattle over goes with a little stick of a powo-tree. With this stick

11: Hartmann M-5 (ca. 1920)1928 FL11 Luo FL11



585 he enters the hut of the bride's mother, and sticks it in the grass roof. The heifer is called the *roch powo*. The men who brought the cattle return with the chip of the bride, which is given to one of her sisters-in-law, who keeps it. Whenever the bride comes to the village of her husband she wares it again.

585 After some time more cattle are sent. Formerly a dowry sometimes used to run up to 18 or 20 head of cattle. When a certain part of the dowry has been paid 583 off, the bride goes to her husband's village for a few days. About 2 months after she has returned again to her father, her husband gathers his friends. With a harp-player amongst them they go to the bride's village, where her father has killed a big bull for the proper marriage feast *(kisera)*. On this occasion the husband asks the girl's father leave to take his wife to his village for good. If he agrees then the girl goes along with him after the feast and takes a hindleg of the bull to the parents and relations of her husband.

585 A few days later word is sent to the bride's village that her husband wants to *riso* i. e. to seal the contract. Wen the messengers return, a bull is killed and all the meat, save one frontleg and the ribs of one side, is taken to the kraal of the bride. Now the girls of her village go to the bridegroom's place, where they grind food and cook it. When the food is dished up, the girls send word to the boys of the husband's kraal. These come and bring their presents, which consist of brass [301] bracelets, iron beads, finger rings, necklaces, beads, brass rings to put round the neck *(odeyo)*, ect., and all these presents are put together. Then the girls ask the bridegroom for 3 goats. He is supposed to give 3 goats or the equivalent a young bull. When these have been presented then only the girls start their meal consisting of the food they cooked, and the meat and ribs of the bull, which were not taken to the bride's village. They stay over the night. In the morning they devide amongst themselves the presents from the boys and go home.

That day the chip is definitely taken away from the bride, because now she has really become a woman of that village. At night the 2 bones of the cows leg with some meat are cooked for the bride, who calls the other women of the village. These take her for the first time to her mother-in-law's hut. When the bride came to the village on former occasions, she was never allowed to enter that hut, because her son had not fully married her yet.

585 The bride now goes home again where her father gets the ingredients for beer ready, which is to be brewn for his daughter's father-in-law, who comes over 273 with his friends, his wife and the other women of the village, some chosen friends, and a singer, who has to sing at the beer party. The bridegroom does not go along, he has had his feast before; this one is in honour of his father. He takes a bull along and wants to know whether now a sufficient dowry has been paid. Lengthy discussions are held, and the news of their little world as well as old history are talked over round the beerpots, to which they return after their evening meal. Next morning a bull is killed for the visitors, who stay over that day and drink beer from [533] early morning till late at night, whilst the minstrel sings his songs and wets his throat alternatively. From the bride he gets the present of a goat for his services. — Once I saw one of these beerparties in full swing, and was told that during the 3 days it lasted so much beer was consumed, that the grain used in its preparations

11: Hartmann M-5 (ca. 1920)1928 FL11 Luo FL11



768 sick in the village and he witchdoctor says that the sickness is due to neglect of deceased's grave, and that they have to sacrifice a goat or a bull to propitiate him, 769 then they put some sticks round the grave again by way of a hut, in the doorway 753 of which they roast a chicken, and some blood of the sacrifice is put in a potsherd and placed on the grave.

On the anniversary of the death or thereabouts beer is brewn again. First 769 however deceased's son visits the witchdoctor, who tels him to sacrifice a special 782 cock, e. g. a big black one, or one with an extra toe, or one with very short legs, ect. Until such a cock is found, as indicated by the witchdoctor, the beer will be of 273 no use. Then the chicken is roasted and eaten, except for one leg which is put on the grave and covered with a basket. Now the *wimbi* for the beer is coarsely ground and put in pots for fermenting. After twelve days the fermented *wimbi* is roasted and the next morning dried. Unground *wimbi* is soaked in water, which is strained off again, and the grain remains for 3 days in covered pots in order to sprout, after which it is dried. When these ingredients are ready, then the next day another visit is paid to the witchdoctor, who again orders a special chicken to be sacrificed, this time e. g. a white one, which is killed and eaten in the morning. Now the [824 wives and children of deceased only pick some seed-pods of a certain wild plant ●301] (*ochok*) which they string like beads on the stalk of creeping grass *(modhono)*. These strings they put round their necks, and also round the necks of the water-vessels with which they go to the well to fetch water for the further preparations of the beer. The water is put out in the sun, and when it has become luke-warm, it is poured on the fermented *wimbi* in big earthen pots. Next day the sprouted *wimbi* is ground and put in the beerpots too. The following morning early the relations put some of the beer, now ready, in a small vessel, which they put on the grave of deceased, with a reed in it, after which the people of the village take some of the beer and drink it. Presently they bring a cock which they suspend by its legs alive in the gateway of the kraal together with some secret medecine, and it remains hanging there till sunset. From 8 o'clock in the morning onwards all the relations, friends and neighbours come to partake of the beer, which is put in an enormus earthen pot *(mbiru)* in an open space outside, each visitor bringing his own reed for sucking the beer. Nobody can enter the kraal that day except by the gateway where the chicken is hanging, all the other entrances being closed up. And the chicken is hung in such a way that anyone entering has to touch it. Suppose a [754] person with an "evil eye" would enter for the purpose of bewitching somebody there, the medicine would start working on him; and he would leave the place with sore eyes, which would cause him much suffering. If this person, however, returns to the village, and owns up that he came there to bewitch somebody, he will be asked to spit on the ground, so that the person bewitched may not die; and doing so his eyes will heal again.

Beer is supplied to anybody entering the kraal for three days at a stretch. No food is cooked these days; if some food is brought from a neighbouring village they may take it but otherwise they live on beer only. All the children of round about, born about the time of persons death and called after him are carried by their mothers to this beer party. Each mother brings a cooked chicken and some

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11



near the entrance to the village, so that they can watch over any attempt to steal cattle. The hut which is directly opposite the gate of the village is usually that of the principal wife of the village head-man. There is much the same superstition as among the Ba-ntu Kavirondo about shutting the door of a house behind a person who has just left it.

Unmarried men go naked. [redacted] men who have children wear a

408. HUSBAND AND WIFE, JA-LUO

small piece of goat skin, which, though quite inadequate for purposes of decency, is, nevertheless, a very important thing in etiquette; for a married man with a child must on no account call on his mother-in-law without wearing this piece of goat skin. To call on her in a state of absolute nudity would be regarded as a serious insult, only to be atoned for by the payment of goats. Even if under the new dispensation a man [i.e.] a very bad one; many the Bantu equivalent to divorce if it occurs between husband and wife. (see p. 752-not processed). ~Rwahyif]

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11



291 wears European trousers, he must have a piece of goat skin underneath.
57% Unmarried girls wear no clothes. Married women wear a tail of strings

[301
142]

behind. When they go to visit another village, they don a goat skin slung from the shoulder, upon which a curious and rather pretty pattern has been burnt with a red-hot stick. When a woman is married, she puts on

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11



291
576
[302]
[754]
304
[171]

this tail behind and receives a present from her husband. Afterwards it is considered very bad manners for a married woman to serve food to her husband without putting on this tail. On the other hand, if the husband or any other man should touch the married woman's tail, it is considered that he wishes to bewitch her, and such an offence must be atoned for by the usual sacrifice of a goat.

430. PATTERN FREQUENTLY SHAVED ON MEN'S HEADS (JA-LUO)

The Ja-luo *pull out the incisors* in the lower jaw. It may also occur amongst these people, as amongst the Lango tribes to the north, that not only the four incisors, but even the canines, are taken out, at any rate from the mouths of boys. They *do not circumcise*, nor do they *scar or tattoo* their bodies, with the exception that women raise three parallel lines of dots in a semi-circle on either side of the body, the ends of the semi-circle meeting in front just below the navel, and again on the backbone. If a man has killed an enemy in war, he propitiates his enemy's spirit by shaving his head for three days after his return. Heads of men are also shaved in the pattern given in the accompanying illustration (Fig. 430).

302
727
782

The Ja-luo, together with tribes remotely allied in origin, such as the Sōk and Lango, *ornament the outer rim of the ear* in a remarkable manner. About fifteen small holes are pierced along the edge of the cartilage, and a flattened ring of brass (looking in shape rather like a melon seed) is inserted. Hanging on the outer side of the brass ring is a large blue glass bead. In the lowest hole towards the lobe a plain brass ring is inserted. Regarding these blue beads Mr. Hobley writes: "For a long time I thought these blue beads were ordinary trade beads of the variety known as 'kiketi'; but upon inquiry I found this idea was indignantly repudiated. It was explained to me that the beads were picked up in the fields in the neighbourhood of the Maragolis Hills* after a heavy thunderstorm, and it was believed that they descended with the rain." Some of the chiefs also wear bits of jasper and chalcedony with a fine circular hole. These beads were formerly of great value, and were purchased at the rate of one cow per bead. They are said to have been picked up in the same way. Their name for these beads is

304
[304]
[171]
[435]

* In North Kavirondo.

14: Johnston G-4. 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11



301 "nyaluo." It is thought by some authorities that these have wandered down in past ages from the direction of Egypt—in fact, some of the

[148 291]

431. A JA-LUO MAN WITH BEAD-RINGS

more northern Nilotic peoples declare that they came from the north or north-east. I imagine that the original possessors of these beads made considerable settlements in the neighbourhood of the Maragulia Hills,

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11



and that the beads were constantly being dropped and lost in the fields. After floods the loosened soil might expose to sight some of the beads which had thus been dropped or thrown away. The supply of these blue

beads is, of course, quite inadequate for the population, and many are making up for the scarcity now by using the ordinary blue beads of commerce.

The Ja-luo men often wear an armlet of threaded cylindrical wooden

14: Johnston G-4. 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

142
291
301
304

[p.786]

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11



blocks on the upper part of the arm. The wooden blocks are coloured red with oxide of iron. A band strung with small pieces of wood of the same colour is sometimes worn round the forehead. Some of the married men wear a semi-circle of ivory on the forehead, made of the split canine teeth of the hippopotamus. (The tooth, however, I am informed, is not split, but ground down until it is only an eighth of an inch thick.) Others wear the tusks of a wart-hog. The Ja-luo men, like most of the tribes of Nilotic origin, frequently adopt a curious stork-like attitude, standing on some hillock or ant-hill on one leg with the other leg bent and the sole of the foot apposed to the inner side of the knee of the leg on which the body is poised. They usually wear sandals of leather when travelling.

The Ja-luo live much by agriculture. They cultivate sorghum, sweet potatoes, peas, beans, dourine, pumpkins, tobacco, and hemp. Salt is made from the ashes of reeds. They eat practically all kinds of meat except the kyusa. Young men eat leopard in order to make them fierce in war. The crested crane is universally protected, and is never killed. The women do not eat fowls, and some women do not eat sheep or eggs. Some eat hippopotamus, and some refuse that meat. Women do not drink milk, but eat it cooked with food. They have a disagreeable custom of mixing cows' urine with the milk of the cow. The urine is allowed to stand a day or two in order to increase its flavour. The people say that this admixture increases the amount of butter in the milk. They like the flavour, and think that it has medicinal value. They kill oxen by sticking a knife into the jugular vein. The head must be pointed to the west during the operation. Sheep and goats are killed in the same manner. Besides the flesh of fowls, cattle, sheep, and goats, they eat large quantities of fish, which they obtain from the rivers, and, above all, from the waters of the Victoria Nyanza.

Cooking is done entirely by women in earthen pots inside the hut or on the verandah, and the food is served in little wicker baskets. Father and sons eat together in a little separate hut which has open sides. Women eat separately from the men inside their own houses.

They do not hunt much with dogs, but catch a good deal of game in pitfalls. They will also attack the elephant with spears. Fish is caught in the Victoria Nyanza by means of large, conical wicker traps called "dema." The process is as follows: They bring two very long ropes, one end of each of which is firmly secured to the shore. One rope lies, weighted, along the bottom under the water, the other floats on the surface, but from it hangs a fringe of papyrus stalks. The two ropes above and below correspond with its other, and are connected at intervals with strings to ensure their correspondence, while the fringe of papyrus

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11



but until the child begins to cut its teeth. The mother does not go out to cultivate for nine days after the birth. If a woman has had two children previously who have died, she follows the same ceremony as that described among the Bantu Kavirondo. When the child has been brought back by an old woman, it is redeemed by the father, who then bores the lobe of the right ear and inserts an ear-ring of brass wire. The child is thenceforth called "Owiti," if a boy; if a girl, "Awiti," meaning "the child that has been thrown away." The old woman who picks up the child is regarded as its foster-mother. Twins are considered lucky, though their arrival is attended by a good many ceremonies and by propitiatory dances which are of an obscene nature.

427. A MEDICINE MAN FROM NYANZA, SOUTH SIDE OF KAVIRONDO BAY

When a person *dies*, the corpse is immediately taken out of the house. If it be a woman, her brothers-in-law dig the grave in the verandah of the house. The corpse is *buried* on its left side with the hand under the head. In the case of a woman's death, her relatives and friends come and wail. Her husband presents each clan that attends with a goat. The mourners stay for three days. The hut in which a person has died is used for a month. The neighbours then meet together and drink beer, and the house is broken down. Upon the death of a man his brother digs his grave, and he is buried in the house of his first wife, if she is still living. If she is dead, he is buried in the verandah of his own house. Men only wail for one day. After that only the women wail, at first for three days, and then at dawn for fifteen days.

As a sign of *mourning* the women wear a string of [illegible] the forehead. They also wear a black tail fringed with white strings for about a month. Others smear themselves with white earth. Relatives of

16: Northcote G-5 (no date) 1907 FL11 Luo FL11



# THE NILOTIC KAVIRONDO.

By G. A. S. Northcote.

101 The Nilotic Kavirondo, or Jaluo as they should more properly be called, who inhabit the north-eastern shore of the Victoria Nyanza, belong to the same family as the great Dinka tribe of the Soudan and are near relations of the Aluri and Acholi tribes which live on both sides of the Nile near Wadilai, the difference being far less marked than those between two adjoining Bantu tribes usually are.

174 In all probability, therefore, the Jaluo originally formed one tribe with the Acholi. What their reasons for migration were cannot be ascertained, but probably it was due to overcrowding or to a dispute about the chieftaincy. The natives themselves can throw but little light on the matter: they state that they came from the north-west under one big chief and that when they *again* became too numerous they split up into smaller chieftaincies. The fact that they lay stress on their again increasing numbers points to the conclusion that overcrowding [624] was their motive for migrating; but as will be seen later, they use secession as their chief weapon against an unpopular chief. Had they been driven out by conquest there would be abundant traces of such a cause, but no such signs are visible.

142 In appearance the Jaluo are a fine race, not so much remarkable for beauty of face as for stature and development. They are a large-boned and deep-chested tribe, somewhat fleshy and very muscular. They present a great contrast in this last respect to the other Nilotic tribes in British East Africa, the Masai, Nandi and Lumbwa. All four are capable of great endurance, but none of the last three named can claim to be a muscular race. The superior physique of the Jaluo is probably [262] due mainly to their agricultural and industrial habits and to the fact that their food is mainly vegetable, while up to the great cattle plague of 1883, the Masai, Nandi and Lumbwa lived entirely upon animal food.

Facially the Kavirondo have rather squat noses, large mouths and big wide-opened eyes. The everyday dress of the men consists of a goat skin hung over the 291 right shoulder, or of nothing. In most cases they have quantities of iron wire on [2-3] [illegible] rings or beads round their necks. The women are usually completely nude, except that married women wear a small [illegible] behind, hanging from the waist; latterly, however, they have taken to [illegible] strip of cloth round the waist about six or eight inches in breadth and [illegible] meeting in front.

[51] The tassels are discarded when a woman's husband dies and cannot be again worn until she is re-married. It is significant of the respect which the Jaluo have

16: Northcote G-5 (no date) 1907 FL11 Luo FL11



towards marriage, that anyone who touches this tassel has to pay a fine of three goats to the husband.

The women do not wear iron wire to the same extent as their husbands and brothers. These may frequently be seen with from six to ten pieces wound round their arms and legs, which shine from constant rubbing and polishing with oil and fat. Happily there are signs that this wire is going out of fashion, whereby they will be spared the sores and ulcers which are its continual accompaniment. Trade generally will thus be put upon a sound cash basis instead of resting as it has done upon a precarious footing of barter. The Jaluo, who are keen traders, have begun to realise the advantages of the rupee over the iron, being helped to this conclusion by the necessity of having to pay three rupees a year for every hut.

The Jaluo full dress is very striking. A huge hat of monkey or goat skin, or of feathers, often of ostrich, surmounts a well-oiled visage which is ornamented by lines of small white beads across the forehead, nose, upper lip and chin and fastened behind the ear. Round the neck are strings of beads, brass cartridge cases, fetishes, and a round or two of iron wire. Across the chest and sometimes down the back are rows of cowries sewn on to strips of leather; and over the right shoulder hangs a big black feather boa, or an ornament made of the long hair from the wildebeest's tail. The everyday goat skin is discarded. Round the waist they fasten strings of iron beads which they manufacture from iron wire; the iron has an extra polish, and from it depend bunches of feathers. The body is well oiled and sometimes covered with red clay or charcoal. Finally they fasten to the knee and ankle small bells made of iron wire in the shape of broad-bean pods and with one or two small iron beads inside.

Their weapons consist of a spear with a long haft and a short blade, a Masai sword on the right hip and occasionally a bow and arrows instead of the spear. Their shields are very large and heavy, made of buffalo hide and of a peculiar shape; vertically they are about three feet six inches in height; horizontally nearly six feet in length and curved back so that the left side, back and front of the warrior are covered; they are painted red, white and black, often in artistic designs. These designs probably at one time indicated to what family the owner belonged; to-day, however, this idea, if it ever existed, seems to have quite disappeared, each man painting on his shield the pattern which pleases him most. Further investigation on this subject should be made in order to make certain whether the patterns have any peculiar meaning.

Some wear the hair long, twisting it into long thin strings and dressing it with oil and red clay or charcoal. Others prefer to shave the head, always leaving at least one little tuft, which is cut off and worn by the chief mourner at the owner's funeral. Sometimes the body is striped or spotted with yellow clay in imitation of the zebra or leopard.

Politically the Jaluo are in a semi-feudal state; the tribe is divided up into larger or smaller chieftaincies or clans, which correspond to the old baronies, but there is no one overlord to make the resemblance complete. Nominally the chiefs

4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11



poisoned arrows have fallen into disuse; there was a medicine man in Gemi country named Opondo who used to make and vend the poison. The Kisumu people also had an arrow poison maker. The poison is said to be composed of snake poison and certain herbs. Nearly all of these people wear sandals of a single thickness of skin when travelling.

*Musical instruments.*—Their harps have eight strings and are the same as those of Northern Kavirondo (Figs. 8, 10); the drum is covered with cow hide; they are called *Thém*. Their drums are also similar to those of Northern Kavirondo and are called *Bél* (Fig. 9). The women also make hand harps of *mtama* stalks called *Odundu*.

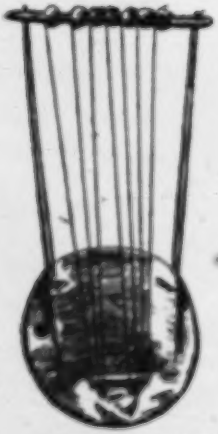


FIG. 8.—HARP: WILOTIC KAVIRONDO.

FIG. 9.—NATIVE OF LUO TRIBE, JA-LUO GROUP, PROFESSIONAL DANCER.

FIG. 10.—REED HARP FROM KAVIRONDO.

*Tobacco and bhang.*—These people smoke and chew tobacco, only a few take snuff. Both sexes smoke and chew tobacco. *Bhang* or Indian hemp is smoked separately in a water pipe. Only men smoke *bhang*. Young fighting men are not allowed to smoke it.

*Tembo or pombe.*—This is made from *mtama* or *wimbi* either singly or mixed. Both sexes drink; young women do not drink with the men, the old women however do so.

4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11



*Personal marks, etc.*—They draw the six middle incisors in the lower jaw. 304
If a man does not have these teeth drawn it is said that his wife will die soon after marriage. The women tattoo a pattern on the chest and stomach, consisting of thin curved lines of dots on each side reaching round to near the spine, where they turn upwards. Males are not tattooed. The tattooing is done simply for ornament.

*Circumcision.*—They do not circumcise. If a man has killed an enemy in war he shaves his head three days after his return from fighting. He moreover 783
does not enter his village until a live fowl has been hung round his neck, the 727
fowl is then decapitated and the head of the fowl left hanging from the man's neck. Shortly after his return a feast is made to the man who has been killed, in order that his spirit shall not come and trouble the victor.

*Dress, etc.*—Unmarried men go naked (Plate V). Married men who have a 291
child wear a small piece of goat skin; this piece of goat skin is a most important 576
matter for a married man, for although practically useless as a covering he must on [606]
no account call to see his mother-in-law without this dress or she will be desperately hurt and insist on his paying up a goat. Even if he is properly clothed in European garments he must wear his goat skin underneath. Unmarried girls wear no clothes (Plate VI). Married women wear a tail of strings behind but not in front, like the Northern Kavirondo. Married women when they go to [574]
visit another village wear a goat skin slung from the shoulder, upon which curious patterns are cut. When a married woman first shows the tail, her husband presents her with a goat, which she sends to her father. It is very bad manners in a married woman to serve up food to her husband without wearing her tail, and the husband will probably refuse to eat the food. This rule even holds if the woman should be wearing garments of cloth. If a man touches a woman's tail it is said that he wishes to bewitch her, even the husband must not touch it; if this rule is broken it is necessary to kill a goat.

Many of the Ja-Luo affect rather a notable ornamentation of the ear; about 301
fifteen small holes are pierced along the outer edge of the ear and in each hole a 304
ring of brass is inserted, and on the front side the brass is flattened out like a small leaf, to the outside extremity of each ring is attached a blue bead. In the lowest hole in the lobe of the ear a plain brass ring is inserted.

For a long time I thought that these blue beads were ordinary trade beads of 301
the variety known as *bikri*, but upon inquiry this was indignantly repudiated, and it was explained that these beads were picked up in the fields in the neighbourhood [777]
of the Maragoli Hills after a heavy thunderstorm, and that it was believed that they descended with the rain. Some of the chiefs also wear beads of jasper and chalcedony with a fine circular hole; these beads were formerly of great value and were purchased at the rate of one cow per bead; they were picked up in the same way. Their name for these beads is Nya-Luo, and it is thought by some authorities that these beads have wandered down in ages past from the direction of Egypt; in fact some of the more Northern Nilotic people tell you that they

4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11



originally came from the north-west. I imagine that the original possessors of these beads had considerable settlements in the neighbourhood of the Maragolia Hills, and that beads were continually being lost in the fields, and now when a heavy thunderstorm comes it washes some of the surface soil away and exposes an odd bead now and again. The supply of the blue Nya-Luo beads is of course quite inadequate for the population, and many make up for the scarcity with the ordinary blue *kiketi* bead.[1] Occasionally these ancient beads are green and yellow, but the usual colour is blue.

The Ja-Luo have a curious habit of shaving curved patterns on their heads (Fig. 11).

FIG. 11.—VIEW OF THE TOP OF A MAN'S HEAD; SHOWING HOW THE PATTERN IS SHAVED.

The young men often wear an armlet of cylindrical wooden blocks on the upper arm; the wooden blocks are coloured red with oxide of iron. A band similarly ornamented with wooden blocks is often worn round the forehead. Some of the older men wear the curved canine tooth of a hippo on the forehead. The tooth is ground down laterally till it is only about one-eighth of an inch in thickness; others wear the tooth of a wart hog attached to a necklace.

The Ja-Luo have a curious habit of standing on the top of an ant hill or in some prominent place on one leg with the flat of the other foot resting against the knee, reminding one of the attitude adopted by a stork; they will remain in this attitude quite comfortably for a considerable time. This habit is I believe characteristic of the Dinka and others of the tribes on the Nile south of Fashoda.

*Miscellaneous customs.*—If a person shuts the door behind him when he leaves a house, people at once say he is a witch doctor. If a wife does this to her husband, the husband will not enter her house again until she fetches a goat from her father and kills it. Similarly if a man is the culprit he has to kill a goat to avert the ill luck. If a house is struck by lightning and anybody is killed inside, the head of the village walks three times round the house with a red rooster and the house is then broken up and the wood utilized for any purpose.

*Witchcraft, etc.*—It is believed that people are killed by witchcraft; the person possessing the medicine has only to show it to a person in order to kill him; to save the person bewitched it is necessary to catch the wizard and to bring him to the [illegible] and he can remove the spell, and the wizard has to pay a fine; this class of medicine man does not hide himself. There is a deeper kind of witchcraft which is only practised at night and with great secrecy. It is called Jamkingo; among the Gemi tribe many of the clan previously referred to who forge iron possess these powers.

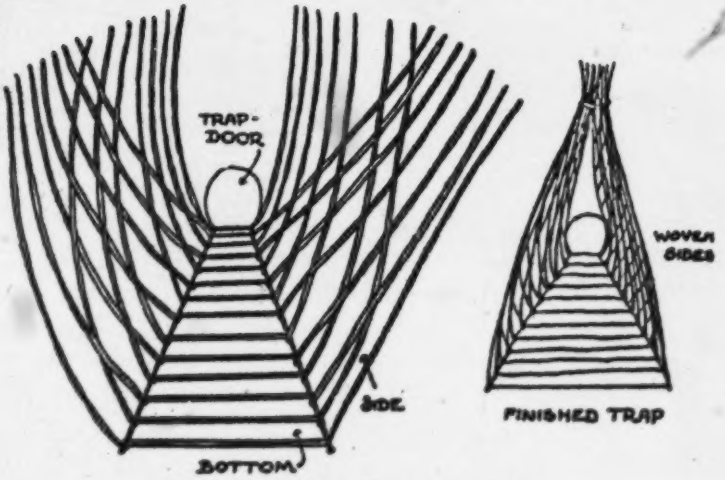
[1] With the kind assistance of Mr. C. H. Read, of the British Museum, I examined the collections of beads at the Museum from various parts of the world, and I found yellow and blue beads of the exact colour and shape among the Egyptian antiquities and jasper beads identical in appearance to the Nya-Luo both from ancient Egypt, and also from excavations made on the site of some buried cities in Beluchistan.

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11



A SELECTION OF PATTERNS WOVEN

285
[222]




(*a*) A Grasshopper trap

[301]

(*b*) A Wrist Band

(*c*) Pattern for the bottom of a basket

857 both at and after birth, the younger being instructed and guided by the older ones. Boys of about five are usually found in the play groups of the school-going age, but as they grow older they are drawn away to male play groups.

The groups themselves vary in size from two members upwards, though occasionally a girl of this age may

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11



the mother. Thus the adolescent girl enjoys the freedom of being able to do most of her domestic work independently. Unless strict discipline is exercised she spends much of her time meeting her male friends. The thought of marriage begins to assume a reality and to become an influential factor in her attitude and movements. The self-love which made its first conspicuous appearance during the preceding age now takes the form of an effort to make herself look more attractive. Holes may be made in the ears from which to suspend ear-rings, and all sorts of armlets or bands are worn round the wrists. Clothes or head-dresses of bright colours are specially chosen. Although the practice is fast dying out, girls of this age used also to be addicted to tattooing their backs. Better clothing is among the most pressing needs of adolescent girls, and their families must either make sacrifices or else persuade the girl to make do with what is available.

*The attitude of the parents.* The attitude of parents towards an adolescent girl is greatly concerned with her economic value and her ability to do domestic work efficiently. An added consideration is the girl's conduct, both in and outside the family circle.

Hence, a girl's ability to work well in the house gives her mother a satisfaction which finds an outlet in conversation with other women. The mother strives to put forward the merits of her daughter as well as her social conduct in the community, while the young girl becomes almost mistress of the house, her mother hardly touching the work—especially when there is more than one adolescent daughter. The shock experienced when the girl is married is a matter which some of the envious neighbours do not refrain from mentioning.

On the other hand, a daughter who is inefficient in domestic work is no credit to her mother's reputation.

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

482
291
● 301
415
516

E.N.

AN ELDERLY WOMAN WITH SOME OF HER FOOD

[p. 56]

21:Huxley Q, T-5 (no date) 1960 FL11 Luo FL11



fifty years later their son, Mr. Paddy Savile, after many years' service in Tanganyika, was to become Chief Agriculturalist to the Government and help to make a path for Progress through the land of his birth. Maseno mission was envisaged as 'a Christian base from which the Gospel might be carried far and wide into the surrounding country, with a school for the sons of Luo chiefs at which future leaders of the country would be trained in a Christian atmosphere.'

Four small boys called Onduso, Odindo, Owiti and Oroa were drafted from Kaimosi to form a nucleus and every 'chief' was asked to contribute two sons. 'Chief' was an arbitrary term, and the leading Luo objected strongly to the disappearance of their sons, probably regarding it as another form of slavery. In those days the Luo went stark naked, used beads or hoes for currency, and prized most highly the black ostrich feathers which warriors wore as head-dresses.

'In five years' time a hundred small boys from the school were sent out, two by two, for a fortnight at a time, to teach in Kisumu and in the villages. Then they came back to Maseno for a month for further teaching. In this way the original Iona idea began to be realized and Maseno became a base of Christian influence.' Bishop Willis developed this idea in a letter: 'It affords a shelter amid a sea of temptation; it makes Christian teaching applicable and Christian living a possibility.'*

So from four small and doubtless bewildered boys under a tree, Maseno developed until by the time of its golden jubilee it embraced primary, intermediate and secondary schools, a teacher-training college, a Jeanes school for adult education, a college for agricultural instructors and veterinary scouts. Even the girls had by this time been included, although their education for years lagged far behind that of their brothers.

At the time of my visit this part of Nyanza was a-buzz with rumour and diatribe, for the District Council in Kisumu had just been dissolved by Governor's decree. To balance the official line on this, I asked to meet a firebrand or two, and everyone agreed that Maseno was the place for a crackle of

*From *Fifty Years in Nyanza*, by Elizabeth Richards, M.A. Maseno Press, 1956.